

BILL SHUSTER  
9TH DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP

**COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

SUBCOMMITTEES:

**CHAIRMAN**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS  
AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

HIGHWAYS, TRANSIT AND PIPELINES

WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-3809

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

SUBCOMMITTEES:

TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES

TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS  
AND CAPABILITIES

**COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS**

SUBCOMMITTEE:

WORKFORCE, EMPOWERMENT AND  
GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

CONGRESSIONAL RURAL CAUCUS

RURAL HEALTH CARE COALITION

CONGRESSIONAL  
SPORTSMEN'S CAUCUS

December 14, 2006

Assistant Secretary Kip Hawley  
Transportation Security Administration  
601 South 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Assistant Secretary Hawley:

In recent weeks, media reports have focused on the removal of six passengers from a US Airways flight taking off from the Minneapolis Airport. The media reported that the flight crew was notified of six men acting in a suspicious manner. Specifically, the crew was told that before boarding the plane the men were making anti-American remarks and were invoking the name of Osama bin Laden. Once on board it was reported that these men, who were traveling together, dispersed to seats throughout the plane. Additionally, they asked the flight crew for seatbelt extenders, which they then rolled up and kept under their seats.

To say that the actions detailed above are alarming is an understatement. From the information I have seen, the flight crew was not only within their rights to remove these passengers from the plane, they were acting in the best interest of their other passengers.

As we continue to wage the Global War on Terrorism, we all have an obligation to protect the homeland. If there is reason to suspect an individual is attempting to do harm, in particular aboard an airplane, we have a responsibility to stop that action. In this instance, the crew acted in an appropriate manner and took the steps necessary to protect those entrusted to their care. When suspicions were justifiably raised, the crew acted to protect their passengers, and for these actions neither the crew nor the airline should be punished.

As the Transportation Security Administration investigates this incident, I encourage you to look at all the facts in this case. Airline passengers deserve to travel with the knowledge that they will be safe. We must not allow the safety of American citizens to be put in jeopardy solely for the sake of political correctness. All Americans have had to learn to tolerate minor inconveniences in order to ensure our safety, and the six passengers temporarily detained for their suspicious actions must also recognize that we now live in a post September 11<sup>th</sup> world.

Thank you in advance for your attention to my concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Elizabeth Carter on my staff, at 202-225-2431 with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Bill Shuster  
Member of Congress

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December 14, 2006

The Honorable Michael Chertoff  
Secretary  
US Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

In recent weeks, media reports have focused on the removal of six passengers from a US Airways flight taking off from the Minneapolis Airport. The media reported that the flight crew was notified of six men acting in a suspicious manner. Specifically, the crew was told that before boarding the plane the men were making anti-American remarks and were invoking the name of Osama bin Laden. Once on board it was reported that these men, who were traveling together, dispersed to seats throughout the plane. Additionally, they asked the flight crew for seatbelt extenders, which they then rolled up and kept under their seats.

To say that the actions detailed above are alarming is an understatement. From the information I have seen, the flight crew was not only within their rights to remove these passengers from the plane, they were acting in the best interest of their other passengers.

As we continue to wage the Global War on Terrorism, we all have an obligation to protect the homeland. If there is reason to suspect an individual is attempting to do harm, in particular aboard an airplane, we have a responsibility to stop that action. In this instance, the crew acted in an appropriate manner and took the steps necessary to protect those entrusted to their care. When suspicions were justifiably raised, the crew acted to protect their passengers, and for these actions neither the crew nor the airline should be punished.

As the Department of Homeland Security investigates this incident, I encourage you to look at all the facts in this case. Airline passengers deserve to travel with the knowledge that they will be safe. We must not allow the safety of American citizens to be put in jeopardy solely for the sake of political correctness. All Americans have had to learn to tolerate minor inconveniences in order to ensure our safety, and the six passengers temporarily detained for their suspicious actions must also recognize that we now live in a post September 11<sup>th</sup> world.

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December 14, 2006

The Honorable Marion C. Blakey  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Administrator Blakey:

In recent weeks, media reports have focused on the removal of six passengers from a US Airways flight taking off from the Minneapolis Airport. The media reported that the flight crew was notified of six men acting in a suspicious manner. Specifically, the crew was told that before boarding the plane the men were making anti-American remarks and were invoking the name of Osama bin Laden. Once on board it was reported that these men, who were traveling together, dispersed to seats throughout the plane. Additionally, they asked the flight crew for seatbelt extenders, which they then rolled up and kept under their seats.

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As we continue to wage the Global War on Terrorism, we all have an obligation to protect the homeland. If there is reason to suspect an individual is attempting to do harm, in particular aboard an airplane, we have a responsibility to stop that action. In this instance, the crew acted in an appropriate manner and took the steps necessary to protect those entrusted to their care. When suspicions were justifiably raised, the crew acted to protect their passengers, and for these actions neither the crew nor the airline should be punished.

As the Federal Aviation Administration investigates this incident, I encourage you to look at all the facts in this case. Airline passengers deserve to travel with the knowledge that they will be safe. We must not allow the safety of American citizens to be put in jeopardy solely for the sake of political correctness. All Americans have had to learn to tolerate minor inconveniences in order to ensure our safety, and the six passengers temporarily detained for their suspicious actions must also recognize that we now live in a post September 11<sup>th</sup> world.

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December 14, 2006

The Honorable Mary E. Peters  
Secretary  
US Department of Transportation  
400 Seventh Street  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Peters:

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